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cation it touches upon creation, miracles, customs among men, qualities among disciples, &c. The sixth chapter is on the acquisition of the Law, and consists of the sayings of Rabbi Meir and others.

A selection of sayings from these Chapters of the Fathers may interest the curious. Here is something for learners: "Jose ben Jo'ezer of Tseredah said, Let thy house be a meeting-house for the wise, and cover thyself with the dust of their feet, and drink their words with thirstiness." The following is from Rabban Gamaliel who evidently understood human nature: "Be cautious of trusting persons in power who do not suffer a man to approach them except for their own interests, who appear as friends when they have an object in view, but will not stand by a man in the time of his need." Hillel's sayings are specially good. Take an example. "Be not trustful in thyself till the day of thy death; and judge not thy companion until thou comest into his place." The great principle of retribution receives from him a grim exposition, thus: "Seeing a skull floating upon the waters he said to it, Because thou didst cause others to float, others have caused thee to float, and at last those who have caused thee to float shall themselves be made to float." Akiba ben Mahalaleel would impress upon his hearers the insignificance of man: "Ponder on three things, and thou wilt not enter into the hands of transgression. Consider whence thou comest, and whither thou goest and before whom in the future thou shalt give account and reckoning. Whence hast thou come? From a fœtid drop. And whither goest thou? To the place of vermin and worm. And before whom art thou in future to give account and reckoning? Before the King of the kings of kings, the Holy One, blessed is He!" The following from Rabbi Jacob is sufficiently stern: "He who walks on the road and meditates, and ceases from his study and says, What a beautiful tree is this! How fine is that new field! it is accounted to him as if he were worthy of death." Here is a good saying from Rabbi Eleazer ben Azaria: "He whose wisdom is greater than his works, to what is he like? To a tree whose branches are abundant and the roots small; and the wind comes and uproots it and overturns it. But he whose works are greater than his wisdom, to what is he like? To a tree whose branches are small and his roots great; though all the winds in the world come and blow against it, they move it not from its place." Among the noted things grouped in fours in chapter fifth are the following: "There are four kinds of dispositions. Easily provoked, and easily pacified, his gain is cancelled by his loss. Difficult to provoke, and difficult to pacify his loss is cancelled by his gain. Difficult to provoke, and easy to pacify, pious. Easily provoked, and difficult to pacify, wicked." Students may be classified now as they were wont to be classified in Talmudic times. "There are four characters in those who sit before the wise, a sponge, a funnel, a strainer, and a sieve. A sponge which sucks up all; a funnel which receives here and lets out there; a strainer, which lets out the wine and retains the dregs; a sieve, which lets out the bran and keeps back the flour." Many treatises written since contain less wisdom than does Pirke Aboth, the Ethics of the Fathers.

JOHN CURRIE.

The Rendering of Romans XII., 16.—The Revised Version of τοῖς ταπεινοῖς συναγαγμένοι is perhaps not one of the most felicitous renderings, and one is tempted to regret the old rendering, "Condescend to men of low estate," with its margin, "Be contented with mean things." Not that the present writer believes that the A. V. is correct, but that if the rendering "lowly things" be adopted, it seems better to

substitute some different rendering for "condescend." "To condescend to a thing" is not said in ordinary English, except when we mean "to condescend to perform an unworthy act." It must be added, however, that on grounds of Greek-biblical usage, "condescend" is too weak an equivalent for *συναπαγόμενοι*. 'Let yourself be captivated by' is more defensible and yet I am not prepared to adopt it, for the following reasons: (1) that the exhortation to be captivated by lowly things (or persons) is unnatural in itself and unsuitable to the immediate context; (2) that *συναπάγωμαι* is not used elsewhere of giving away to a good impulse, and above all, (3) that Hebraistic considerations have not had their full weight. Readers of Dr. Franz Delitzsch's recent pamphlet on the Hebrew New Testament, and of his various Hebraistic articles, chiefly in German, but some (I think) in this periodical, illustrative of New Testament Greek, will recognize the importance of asking whether St. Paul may not have had some Hebrew phrase in his mind, when he penned the strange word *συναπαγόμενοι*. The Peshito does not help us much; it paraphrases "Attach yourselves to those who are humble." Nor does Delitzsch's Hebrew New Testament carry us far with the rendering, excellent as it is, כִּי אִם-הִתְרַעוּ אֶת-הַשְּׁפָלִים "but make friends with those that are lowly." But the earlier translation of the Epistle to the Romans by the same scholar (published separately in 1870) really does help us, for it shows us how the Greek is to be explained philologically. The rendering of the clause there given is כִּי אִם-הִתְנַהֲגוּ עִם-הַשְּׁפָלִים "but familiarize yourselves with those that are lowly." This suggests that St. Paul translated the Hebrew or Chaldee phrase which came into his mind with regard to its primary meaning "to lead oneself away with" rather than its secondary one (established by the Talmud and the Targums; cf. Eccles. II., 3), "to accustom oneself to," "to familiarize oneself with." Possibly the curious word *συμπεριφερόμενοι* in the Wisdom of Sirach, XXV., 1, may be explained in a similar way.

Ethically, it is surely a great advantage to get rid of the word 'condescension' from the works of that great moralist as well as theologian, St. Paul. In his life, he shows no trace of condescension, any more than did his Master.

Never could he have said, "Condescend to be lowly," for his practice would have belied his theory. It is true, "Let yourselves be captivated by lowly things," is equally alien to him who 'became all things to all men,' and who could be 'captivated' alike by rich and poor, while their need of him lasted. T. K. CHEYNE.

The Tenses of the First Psalm.—Understanding (1) that in Hebrew there are three tenses, which, however, express not the date or time of an action but the kind or character of it, and (2) that these are called (*a*) the *Perfect*, designating an action as complete, or finished, or real, (*b*) the *Imperfect*, designating an action as incomplete, unfinished, i. e., as beginning, repeated, or contingent, and (*c*) the *Participial*, designating an action as continuing without interruption, let us examine in detail the verbs of the first Psalm.

1. "Blessed is the man that walketh not in the counsel of the ungodly, nor standeth in the way of sinners, nor sitteth in the seat of the scornful." The word in the original for "blessed" is not a verb, but a noun in the plural and used as a Vocative: *O the happinesses of the man*, etc. The verbs translated "walketh," "standeth," "sitteth," are not *Imperfects*, expressing something that this godly man does not do repeatedly or habitually, although this thought would have